



Media Release

Steve Francis wins Australian Late Model Championship



**ABOVE : Frank's Auto Parts Australian Late Model Championship podium.
Left to right : 3rd Michael Holmes, 1st Steve Francis, 2nd Jamie Oldfield,
Frank's Auto Parts representative Ross Nicastri. Photo by Gary Reid.**

Steve Francis has written himself into the record books as the first US racer to win the Australian Late Model Championship after a thrilling A Main victory at Tyrepower Sydney Speedway Saturday January 28.

The record books will also show that Francis led every lap, but statistics can be deceiving, as he was under pressure from the drop of the green flag, a situation that existed for the entire race distance.

Francis, driving the USA#7 Time Target backed Rocket owned by Scott McPherson, started out of position two, and got the jump on pole-sitter Devin Moran into turn one.

From there the 'Kentucky Colonel' had to maintain a steady line, and his composure, in the face of numerous challenges.

Moran (USA#99), Michael Holmes (#W91), and Jamie Oldfield (#W51), started to apply the pressure to the leader, with all four cars separated by less than 20 metres

as the yellows flashed 10 laps in when Paul Stubber (#N9) became the first casualty in the 24 car field with a damaged front left wheel.

The mid field battles were just as intense, with defending title holder Brad Blake (#W0) having to race high and wide for many laps as he tried to clear several cars running at the same pace. Speedcar sensation Nathan Smee, who won a Heat on night 1 in the immaculate American Tyre & Racing Services #N15, quickly moved up to be sitting in 5th. Smee was working the pole line to perfection and sat just off the tail of the leaders as the race passed mid distance.

Up front the battle continued to rage between the top four, with the order approaching half distance reading Francis, Moran, Holmes, and Jamie Oldfield.

A quick yellow, following a spin by Dean Hawkins (#Q43), regrouped the field, but the top four continued to wage war, with Moran, Holmes, and Oldfield chopping and changing lines in an effort to rattle Francis.

Jamie Oldfield was on the move though, eventually nailing down second, and applying relentless pressure to Francis.

With 11 laps remaining Col Robinson (#N88) spun and the next few laps were peppered with yellows as a result of spins, car damage, and retirements.

When racing resumed Oldfield tagged onto the rear of the Francis car but try as he might he was unable to find a way past. Over the final few circuits Holmes accounted for Moran, while David Robertson (#4x) closed on Smee who had cemented a 5th position finish.

As the chequered flag was unfurled Francis swept past with Jamie Oldfield still glued to his bumper, ahead of Holmes and Moran. At flag fall less than 50 metres separated the top four while 16 of the original starters finished on the lead lap.

As a spectacle the Frank's Auto Parts Australian Late Model Championship A Main had everything, with good, clean racing on a track that was very well prepared by the team at Tyrepower Sydney Speedway.

The official finishing order read :

1. USA7 Steve Francis
2. W51 Jamie Oldfield
3. W91 Michael Holmes
4. USA99 Devin Moran
5. N15 Nathan Smee
6. 4X David Robertson
7. W15 Warren Oldfield
8. W0 Brad Blake
9. W9 Ben Ludlow
10. N99 Ben Nicastrì

11. V55 Darren Forrest
12. N12 Darryl Grimson
13. N75 Stewart Jordan
14. S10 Mat Crimmins
15. W11 Jason Oldfield
16. N65 Barry Kelleher
17. N6 Nick Girdlestone
18. Q9 Aaron Van Zeeland
DNF Q43 Dean Hawkins
DNF W52 Jay Cardy
DNF W63 Koran Atkinson
DNF N88 Col Robinson
DNF Q54 Matt Ingrey
DNF N9 Paul Stubber

Earlier in the evening Francis, Moran, Jamie Oldfield, and Jason Oldfield won Heats, with Moran and Smee taking a Dash each. Smee's win in the Dash was decided by millimetres as Ben Ludlow (#W9), Warren Oldfield (#W51), and the N15 flashed across the line side by side.

The B Main saw Col Robinson take the win, with Stubber, Ingrey, Cardy, Kelleher, and Aaron van Zeeland also earning transfer spots into the A.

Heat winners on night one (Friday January 27) were Francis (2), Moran, Smee, Jamie Oldfield, Robertson, Atkinson, and Crimmins. The two Night 1 Mini Features were won by Moran and Francis.

NSW Late Models thanks the following supporters of the 11th Annual Australian Late Model Championship :

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For full coverage of the Frank's Auto Parts Australian Late Model Championship visit www.nswlatemodels.com



ABOVE : Steve Francis leads Devin Moran on his way to claiming the Australian Late Model title. Photo by Gary Reid.

Ends Release

30th January 2012 : Media Release by Rod Thurgood : www.ozmotorsportpromotions.com